

Presidential Documents

Title 3—

Proclamation 6810 of July 17, 1995

The President

Captive Nations Week, 1995

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

As we mark the 36th observance of “Captive Nations Week,” Americans reflect on the sorrow of peoples throughout the world who are physically and spiritually oppressed by their governments. In our hearts, we know that the ongoing struggle for individual liberty is part of a larger cause—an international quest for true peace. Recent years have seen great progress in the global march toward freedom. But far too many of humanity’s children still live in fear.

Our commemoration of this week reflects the concern of Americans for all of those in need. Having sustained the promise of democracy for more than 200 years, we understand its many blessings and its profound importance in the world. While we celebrate the triumph of democratic governments in nations around the globe, we stay bound to those who remain prisoners of violence, poverty, and prejudice. As beneficiaries of freedom’s power, we must champion their struggle, promoting respect for human dignity everywhere on Earth.

Stripped of fundamental personal rights and barred from realizing their political voice, the captive citizens of authoritarian regimes share our people’s dreams of happiness. Today, in nations of the former Soviet bloc and from Asia to Africa to Latin America, our new democratic friends are acting on their hopes for opportunity and prosperity, recognizing that respect for individual freedom is the key to internal and international stability. America plays a vital role in this process of growth and change. As President John F. Kennedy said years ago, our “historic task in this embattled age is not merely to defend freedom. It is to extend its writ and strengthen its covenant.” We Americans have an enormous stake in the fate of captive nations. Their future is no less than our greatest hope for peace.

The Congress, by Joint Resolution approved July 17, 1959 (73 Stat. 212), has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation designating the third week in July of each year as “Captive Nations Week.”

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim July 16 through July 22, 1995, as Captive Nations Week. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities, rededicating ourselves to the principles of freedom and justice on which this Nation was founded and by which it will ever endure.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this seventeenth day of July, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-five, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twentieth.

